



Course title:	Engaging Social Justice, Diversity, and Oppression in Social Work
Course #/term:	SW505 Section 8, Fall 2022
Time and place:	Mondays, 9-12p, Room B798 SSWB
Credit hours:	3
Prerequisites:	
Instructor:	Erin Khang LMSW
Pronouns:	[She/Her]
Contact info:	Email: ekhang@umich.edu *preferred Phone: 734-764-3121 You may expect a response within 24 hours
Office:	
Office hours:	By appointment – please email (open to in person or zoom)

1. Course Statement

a. Course description

This required essentials course is designed to increase students' awareness, knowledge, and critical skills related to diversity, human rights, social and economic justice. The course focuses heavily on engaging diversity and differences in social work practice and advancing human rights and social and economic justice, through understanding power and oppression across micro, meso, and macro levels. We will explore the knowledge base that underlies skills needed to work towards justice. These include types and sources of power, multiple social locations, social constructions, social processes, social identities, conflicts, and how all these interact. A major emphasis is on self reflexivity and developing skills in critical contextual thinking and analyses, as well as learning to use knowledge and theory to recognize critique, and engage underlying assumptions, and inform working for change. Multiple kinds of understanding are especially important—across groups, between organizations and system levels, and within and between people, related to intersecting social locations.

b. Course objectives and competencies

- Recognize the extent to which structures, policies, and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, create or enhance privilege and power (Essential 14, 30, 33, 44; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5, 6).
- Explain the cumulative effect of structural discrimination on people with differing and multiple social identities and locations (Essentials 11, 14, 29, 33, 38, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 6).
- Distinguish between health differences and health disparities, and provide relevant examples of each (Essential 5, 11, 15, 30; EPAS 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8).
- Discuss the policy reform sought by modern social justice movements in response to police brutality (Essential 6, 13, 14, 30, 32, 44; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7).
- Recognize how policy decisions at the local, state, and national level can exclude and endanger the environmental health of citizens when their voices are not heard or heeded (Essential 5, 13, 22, 29, 30; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).
- Utilize strategies and resources to advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice and change, while protecting human rights (Essential 1, 11, 14, 29, 33, 43; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 6, 7).
- Define and apply your own positionalities and the importance of their intersections (Essential 38, 42, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 6)
- Evaluate historical context and its current applications within the profession and practice as an ally (Essential 6, 11, 15, 29, 39, 44, 45; EPAS 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8).

c. Course design

This class will strive to foster a learning environment where each student can reflect critically on sources of power and mechanisms of oppression and privilege, construct a framework for justice, and examine sources and impacts of their beliefs and perspectives. This course will work to create a climate that supports critical analyses, mutual learning, engaging within and across differences, examining sources of power and knowledge, and understanding more about identities. It involves lectures, video, discussion and participation in experiential activities. Additionally, this course will provide a forum to critically examine how our multiple status locations, societal constructions, and social processes shape our beliefs, assumptions, behaviors, and life experiences. Special attention will also be given knowledge about justice and change, and principles of change towards justice.

d. Intensive focus on PODS

This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision

of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning. Specifically, this course centers entirely on engaging with, exploring, and better understanding PODS as related to social work practice on all levels. PODS is infused through this course and its assignments, which require self reflection, group work with practice of skills learned, and application of key concepts to understand social justice issues and social work responses to the myriad of needs connected to PODS, both with clients/communities, and social workers themselves.

2. Class Requirements

Text and class materials

Articles/readings and/or multimedia clips will be posted in canvas.

To fully engage in the course topic and become a competent and skilled social work practitioner, it is expected that students will complete all required readings.

Class schedule

*(*subject to change at the discretion of the professor)*

Date/Time	Agenda (Pework in Canvas)	Assignments
Week 1 8/29/22	Intro to course Critical Race Theory, Anti-Racism	CRT Podcast
9/5/22	Labor Day Holiday	No Class
Week 2 9/12/22	Implicit Bias & Privilege Current Events example	Privilege Checklist Reflection #1
Week 3 9/19/22	Dialogue vs Debate Current Events	Reflection # 2
Week 4 9/26/22	Medical Racism Current Events	Reflection # 3

Week 5 10/3/22	Transgender Healthcare Current Events	Reflection # 4
Week 6 10/10/22	Ableism Current Events	Reflection # 5
10/17/22	Fall Break	No Class
Week 7 10/24/22	Exploring Environmental Justice and Health Current Events	Team A Group Presentation Rest of Class – choose one other topic due by 11/21/22
Week 8 10/31/22	Exploring Gun Violence and Health Current Events	Team B Group Presentation Rest of Class – choose one other topic due by 11/21/22
Week 9 11/7/22	Exploring Immigration and Health Current Events	Team C Group Presentation Rest of Class – choose one other topic due by 11/21/22
Week 10 11/14/22	Exploring Homelessness and Health Current Events	Team D Group Presentation Rest of Class – choose one other topic due by 11/21/22
Week 11 11/21/22 Virtual	Exploring Incarceration and Health Current Events	Team E Group Presentation Rest of Class – choose one other topic due by 11/21/22
Week 12 11/28/22	Health Equity Current Events	No Assignments
Week 13 12/5/22	Wrap Up, Evaluations, Class Topics	No Assignments Final Assignment Due 12/9/22 @1159p

Assignments

Assignment	Due date
Reflection Papers (5 total)	See assigned dates in Canvas
Current Events Presentation and Facilitation	See assigned date in Canvas

Social Justice Themes Assignments & Team Presentation	See assigned team presentation dates in Canvas
Participation and Attendance	Ongoing
Implicit Bias Module	By the beginning of the last class 12/5 @9a
Life Trajectory Final Assignment	See assigned date in Canvas

Attendance and class participation

Attendance is a requirement and expectation- please note the additional guidance below specific to health related absences. Students are able to miss two classes for any reason (e.g., personal, sick, religious holidays). There is no need to email the instructor with your reason for missing the class(es). Students who miss three classes will receive a full letter grade reduction. Four or more missed classes will result in a non-passing grade. Extenuating circumstances that should be considered need to be discussed with the professor as soon as possible. Students who will miss more than two classes due to religious holidays must make arrangements with the instructor before the second class to avoid a grade penalization. **Please note that the student is responsible for all of the content missed during your absences.**

[Policy on Class Attendance](#) found in the MSW Student Guide.

Participation:

Class participation is more than mere attendance. It is also arriving on time, reading the assigned material, preparing for class, contributing appropriately to class discussions, doing assignments, and participating in class activities and group activities. Participation does not mean you need to talk a lot in class. It is more about bringing a positive learning attitude to the class and being present for each session. Each of us participates differently, and I will strive to honor that diversity among us.

Students are expected to engage in an open and respectful dialogue, use the classroom environment as practice for professional interactions with clients and colleagues, and maintain civility in in-class, online, e-mail, video, and all other forms of communication with both the instructor and class colleagues. Inappropriate behaviors with regard to any of the aforementioned contexts could result in a loss of participation/engagement points (see below). ***NOTE:** Students who do not adhere to the stated course policies may be asked to leave class and be marked absent for the session.

I will use this matrix to determine the class participation grade. Late is defined as arriving 10min or more after class begins.

(0 – 6) Poor Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not attend in-person class sessions • No effort, disruptive, and disrespectful • Uses harmful language in class and does not respect other students' identities
(7-12) Marginal Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late most/all in-person class sessions (>4) • More than two class absences • Little effort, texting or web surfing (irrelevant to course) • Demonstrates infrequent involvement in class or class discussions • Uses harmful language at times in class and sometimes does not respect other students' identities
(13-18) Moderate Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late to multiple in-person class sessions (3-4) • Moderate effort, texting or web surfing on occasion (irrelevant to course) • Knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them • Rarely offers to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on • May seem occasionally distracted or uninterested • Uses inclusive language at times and respects other students' identities to an extent
(19-24) Strong Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely late (1-2) and no in-person class absences • Engaged in classroom activities only while in the class • Has clearly read and asks pertinent questions about course material • Offers interpretations or analysis of course material (more than just facts) to class • Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way • Responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way • Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement by active visual and /or verbal engagement • Uses inclusive language in class and respects other students' identities
(25-30) Excellent Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently on time and no absences • Engaged in classroom activities only while in the class • Has analyzed course material exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates actively and equally during in class discussions, and group activities • Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion keeps discussion focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative dialogue-building • Demonstrates ongoing active involvement and active visual and/or verbal engagement • Always uses inclusive language in class and respects other students' identities
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a. Grading

b. Course Grading Scale (Total points available 250)

A+	250-245	C+	199-194
A	244-234	C	193-183
A-	233-225	C-	182-175
B+	224-219	D	174-150
B	218-208	F	<150
B-	207-200		

Grading Continued:

Reflection Papers x 5	50 pts	20%
Current Events Facilitation	20 pts	8%
Social Justice Themes x2	40 pts	16%
Class Attendance and Participation	30pts	12%
Implicit Bias Module	20pts	8%
Final Assignment	90 pts	36%

Late Assignments: Late assignments will not be accepted unless there is an agreed upon discussion and plan with the professor. The due date and times are listed in Canvas. Please plan accordingly. Assignments received after the due date and time listed will receive a 0.

Incompletes: Incompletes are given only when it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the stated time limits of the course. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes.

MSW Student Guide policies on [Grades in Academic Courses and in Field Instruction](#) as well as [Student Grievance procedures](#).

Class Recording and Course Materials

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website. On days when classes are recorded, students will be notified a recording is occurring. Class recordings and course materials may not be reproduced, sold, published or distributed to others, in whole or in part, without the written consent of the instructor.]

COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including properly wearing a face covering in class and compliance with the University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the Campus Maize & Blueprint. Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through WolverineAccess. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor's note) for medical excuses is *not* required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: <https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources>. They include:

- *Safety and emergency preparedness*
- *Mental health and well-being*
- *Teaching evaluations*
- *Proper use of names and pronouns*
- *Accommodations for students with disabilities*
- *Religious/spiritual observances*
- *Military deployment*
- *Writing skills and expectations*
- *Academic integrity and plagiarism*